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t For Power Firm Is Above Reproach

The Capital Times :: EDITORIAL :: A11

Monday, February 20, 2006

George Meyer former DNR secretary NRF board member

Dear Editor: A recent article in The Capital Times called into question the propriety of a "Green Tier" agreement entered into by the DNR and the American Transmission Co.

In the article some individuals expressed concerns that the agreement will lead to a relaxed environmental regulation of ATC.

To the contrary, entering into the Green Tier program requires companies such as ATC to go beyond current environmental standards and agree to additional regulatory requirements ensuring "superior environmental performance." In addition, ATC has agreed to provide \$300,000 a year to the Natural Resources Foundation for grants to governments and private and nonprofit groups for conservation and educational purposes.

The board of directors of the foundation, 15 independent individuals, not the DNR, will make the decision on the annual grants. The DNR regulatory process and the foundation grant issuance process are independent and highly transparent to the public.

The Green Tier program is not a new program. It was based on the five-year pilot "Cooperative Environmental Agreement" program that was highly scrutinized by the Legislature and the public and proved to be successful. The Green Tier program was based on similar successful programs administered by the highly environmentally respected governments of the Netherlands and the German state of Bavaria.

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